

<p>IN THIS ISSUE Tuberculosis Diagnostic and Treatment Services for Uninsured Persons (TB-UP) Program</p>	<p>FROM David McKeown, MDCM, MHSc, FRCPC Medical Officer of Health</p>
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The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) has introduced the Tuberculosis Diagnostic and Treatment Services for Uninsured Persons (TB-UP) Program to ensure all persons in Ontario, regardless of medical insurance coverage, have access to services for the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis (TB) infection and disease. This program will eliminate the financial barrier faced by uninsured persons requiring these services and reduce the risk of transmission of TB. The number of individuals in Peel Region requiring this program is not large and therefore we do not expect this program to have a significant impact on the workload for service providers.

On March 31, 2004 the MOHLTC sent TB-UP Program information to Ontario Physicians, laboratories and radiology service providers. Please refer to this information for more detail, or call Peel Health for clarification.

The TB-UP Program

The TB-UP Program consists of processing payments for physicians, laboratories and radiology service providers for out-patient TB diagnostic and treatment services provided to uninsured persons. The Registration and Claims Branch (RCB) of the MOHLTC will process the payments to Health Care Providers for TB-UP clients through a manual reimbursement method that is completely separate from the OHIP system. However, services provided will be paid at the same rate as the Schedule of Benefits fee value for the service. **Payments under TB-UP do not affect utilization discounts or thresholds that may apply to OHIP billings.** Submission instructions are found on the Health Care Provider Claim Form – Instruction sheet.

Accessing the TB-UP Program

The program is accessed through the public health department in the jurisdiction where the client resides. For all clients who live in Peel Region, contact Peel Health TB Program at 905-799-7700.

Who Can Make a Referral to the TB-UP Program?

- Client should contact local health department directly, or
- Physician/service agency

Eligibility Criteria

The client **does not** have medical coverage for TB i.e. OHIP, Interim Federal Health (IFH), private coverage for TB; **and**, the client must be one of the following:

- Suspect/active TB case
- Contact of an active TB case; or
- At high risk of developing active TB e.g. AIDS, HIV, transplantation, silicosis, chronic renal failure/hemodialysis, carcinoma of head and neck, recent TB infection (≤ 2 years), fibronodular disease on chest x-ray **

Eligible Service Providers

Service providers eligible for payment under the TB-UP program must be:

- Medical clinical service providers (physicians) licensed in their province of practice, and other service providers (i.e. laboratories or radiology facilities), who are normally compensated on a fee for service basis
- Physicians who have opted out of OHIP can participate in Program but must bill RCB and not bill the client directly

The TB-UP program does not cover in-patient services for hospitalized patients or services by health care providers who are salaried or are normally compensated through a global budget to provide such services. Medical clinical services for TB provided by a physician, who is paid on a fee for service basis, to an in-patient, will be covered under the TB-UP program. Coverage

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under TB-UP will commence once the client is fully registered in the program.

Process

The client/physician/service agency should contact Peel Health TB Program staff during regular business hours at Health Line Peel 905-799-7700 to:

- Determine if client eligible for coverage under TB-UP Program
- Refer client for registration in the program

Peel Health will:

- assess the client's eligibility for coverage under TB-UP,
- verify the client's identity
- obtain the eligible client's written consent (which provides consent for sharing of information). **Clients who do not sign an Application and Consent form cannot be registered in this program.**
- assign a TB-UP registration number to be used on all claim forms, and
- provide initial Health Care Provider Claim form package either to attending physician or to eligible client to take to their physician (each Claim form will be labelled for the service they are intended and be accompanied by an instruction sheet)
- eligible clients may be registered while in the physician's office or out-patient clinic if the physician contacts Peel Health directly. The physician must verify OHIP status and client identification, and obtain consent (via fax) and return the signed consent (via fax) to Peel Health TB Program staff
- issue additional claim forms monthly, upon request from physician

The physician will:

- verify client's OHIP status and personal identification
- notify appropriate health department of uninsured person who has either

suspect/active TB or who is a contact of active TB and request registration in TB-UP program

- keep two Claim forms for initial and follow-up visit
- give remaining Claim forms to the client to provide to the laboratory and radiology service providers as required; physician should attach test/x-ray requisitions to the appropriate claim form
- notify Peel Health of the client's diagnostic and treatment plan and request the required number of Claim forms to cover subsequent visits/x-rays and tests for the next four week period
- ask client at each visit if they now have OHIP
- if client becomes insured under OHIP they are no longer eligible for TB-UP coverage and the service provider should submit claims through OHIP program
- Notify Peel Health of the OHIP coverage

Health Care Service Providers will:

- submit completed Claim forms to RCB for assessment for payment and processing of payment under the TB-UP program (a separate claim form must be used for each date of service)
- return all Claim forms that have not been used to the appropriate health department

Remember:

TB is preventable, treatable and curable.

Medications to prevent and treat TB are available free of charge from Peel Health

For more information or to refer a client for registration in the TB-UP Program contact Health Line Peel at 905-799-7700